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The Family State and Forced Youth Migrations in Wartime Japan (1937–1945)

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L. Halliday Piel

1 This paper examines the disjunction between the state ideology of family in wartime Japan (1937–1945) and total war policies that tore families apart, even removing children from their parents' care and supervision. On the one hand, the militarist government promoted a romanticized vision of the family as the basis of the nation-state. Since the Meiji period, state law preserved the paternalistic extended family, despite its erosion by the forces of modernization. On the other hand, the government adopted "Total War" policies that sent many breadwinners to battlefields and military factories, while encouraging wives and grandparents to volunteer with Administered Mass Organizations. Government policies sent teenagers to colonize Manchuria or work in domestic munitions factories. Towards the end of the war, preteen rural children were pulled from school to help farmers; many urban children were evacuated from the cities in school groups and sent to the countryside to escape the Allied bombing. How was forced migration justified by the government, or tolerated by parents in the context of the state's emphasis on family? When parents cooperated with the authorities, were they merely following orders, or did they see some benefit for their children or for themselves? Were there times when they refused to cooperate? These questions are addressed in the context of three types of youth migration: (1) "Young Pioneers" in Manchuria, (2) student conscript labor, and (3) school evacuations. A comparison of the three shows the differing motives of the state and the parents.

Types of Forced Youth Migration in Wartime Japan

2 Several types of youth migration took place that were government-sponsored and "forced" to varying degrees. At the start of the war with China in 1937, the National Diet approved sending farm boys between the ages of sixteen and nineteen to communes in Manchuria, a puppet state of Japan controlled by the Japanese North China Army (*Kantōgun*) since 1931. These boys, who had finished elementary school but were too young for military service, would serve Japan's colonial objectives by learning how to become homesteaders and leaders of future Japanese settlements. The Hirota Cabinet hoped to send a million Japanese families to Manchuria over a twenty-year period in order to alleviate population pressure in Japan and construct a utopia called the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere (*Dai-tōa kyōeiken*). The government managed to recruit roughly 86,000 youths between the ages of 14 and 21. Some 24,000 perished or disappeared by the war's end. They were organized in brigades called the Manchu-Mongol Pioneer Youth Loyal and Brave Army (*Man-Mō kaitaku seishōnen giyūgun*), hereafter referred to as Young Pioneers.

3 The war intensified after Pearl Harbor with a second front opening in the Pacific. Starting in December 1941, the National Diet began passing emergency mobilization laws that pulled male and female students out of middle school and high school to replace adult factory and farm workers who had been called to war. An estimated 3,100,000 students were called up to work in factories and farms. At first, it was limited to summer vacations or short-term shifts. By June 1943, the Tōjō Cabinet extended the shifts to boost aircraft production. To that end, the 1943 Wartime Special Ordinance for the Factory Act was enacted to lower the minimum age of employment from sixteen to eleven. College deferments ceased; male university students had to enroll in the army. In October, the Koiso cabinet ordered schools to devote one-third of class time to labor service. The Emergency Student Labor Mobilization Strategy Outline of January 1944 (*Kinkyū gakuto kinrō dōin hōsaku yōkō*) paved the way for successive year-long shifts.[1]

4 Towards the end of the war, the government evacuated half a million children between the ages of eight and twelve in school groups from Okinawa and twelve major cities to escape the American bombardment. There may have been as many as 400,000 orphans as a result of the American firebombing.[2] Some orphans were placed with foster families; others became homeless, begging for food in train stations, sometimes dying of hunger and exposure. Periodically, the local police would round them up and send them to understaffed and insufficiently funded shelters and reformatories. There were few public shelters for children until the end of the American Occupation.[3]

Prior Research on Forced Youth Migration in Wartime Japan

5 Historians tend to approach Japanese youth migration from the perspective of human rights. This is because much of the source material has been gathered by associations of former child migrants, who view themselves as forgotten war victims deserving compensation from the government. They argue that even if they participated voluntarily or with enthusiasm, it was not possible for children to resist policies designed

by and carried out by adults. Sakuramoto Tomio argued in 1987 that government campaigns deceived the youth it sent to Manchuria with false promises, and put them in harm's way on the Siberian border, abandoning them when the Soviets attacked in August 1945.[4] In 1999, the Association to Document Student Conscript Labor in Kanagawa prefecture (*Kanagawa no gakuto kinrō dōin o kiroku suru kai*), hereafter referred to as Kanagawa Association, published the stories of youth laborers, many of whom suffered illness, injury, and death. One of its contributing members, Sasaya Kōji, believes that teenage labor service has received less attention in recent times than other facets of war life affecting youth. The Kanagawa Association's purpose is to raise awareness and keep the sacrifice of youth laborers alive in national memory.[5] Kaneda Mari, a war orphan and an activist with the Japan Association of Families of War Victims (*Nihon sensai izoku kai*, 1977–...), documented the fate of school children orphaned during evacuations to show that school evacuations produced victims deserving recognition and financial compensation.[6]

6 Historians have also examined the role of state education in furthering government policies. For instance, the Nagano Prefectural Association of History Educators investigated how the Shinano Education Association (*Shinano kyōiku kai*) recruited the highest number of Young Pioneers in the country. It questioned the purpose of public education, hoping to prevent future complicity with imperialism.[7] More recently in 2008, Shiratori Michihirō, editor of a seven-volume compilation of documents on youth migrants to Manchuria, disputes the influential view of the displacement as "cruelty to children," advanced in 1974 by children's literature specialist, Kami Shōichirō. He sees it as a logical extension of wartime public education, combining technical training, hands-on work experience, and patriotic service to the nation.[8] This paper differs from prior research in that it examines Japanese youth migration during the Second World War through the lens of Japanese family ideology.

The Japanese Household (ie) and the Family-State Ideology (ie seidō)

7 Pre-war Japanese family structure was shaped by the Household Registration Law (*koseki hō*) of 1872 and the Meiji Civil Code of 1898 (*Meiji minpō*). Enacted during the Meiji period of modernization (1828–1911), these laws nevertheless preserved aspects of samurai family tradition of the Edo period (1600–1868), namely the extended family composed of a stem family and collateral branches, headed by a male head of household. Family relationships were tracked by means of a registration system. Although sons could establish separate residences, they were legally subject to the house head. The household (*ie*) was more than the sum total of its living members. It was in many cases an occupation, as well as a lineage with ancestral spirits who required ritual appeasement. If he lacked a male heir, the house head could adopt one from a collateral branch. The adopted son was expected to marry a daughter of the house and take her name.

8 Systemized by laws, the household system (*ie seido*) enabled the government to retain contact with the masses through their house heads, who were legally accountable to for the behavior of family members. The household system provided a security net for those who fell sick or lost their jobs. It was also a useful metaphor for the relationship between the emperor and the people. Meiji leaders portrayed the emperor as the head of a

national stem family. Thus, ordinary families were collateral branches of the national line, and the household system was therefore a basis of national pride and identity.

9 Nevertheless, it was not above criticism. During the 1870s and 1880s, leaders of the Popular Rights Movement, such as Ueki Emori (1857–1892), criticized the patriarchal Confucian basis of family. The feminist Kishida Toshiko (1864–1901) called for equal rights for wives and political representation for female house heads (who existed in the absence of male heirs, but did not share the same privileges). Japan's first modern Civil Code, proposed to the National Diet in 1890, reflected these concerns. Drafted on the French model with the help of the renowned legal expert Gustave Emile Boissonade de Fontarabie (1825–1910), it would have allowed free choice in marriage, equal rights in divorce, and the freedom to choose one's own domicile.[9] However, several conservative lawyers argued that the French idea of natural and inalienable rights contradicted the social hierarchy and the supremacy of a divine ruler. An editorial in the *Tokyo Economic Journal* of 22 August 1891 declared that the Civil Code would undermine the very basis of Japan by replacing the Confucian harmony between father and son, or master and servant, with contractual relationships.[10]

10 After a heated debate, those in favor of individual rights lost, and the Civil Code was rewritten in 1898 along Prussian lines to maintain established hierarchies. The family superseded the individual in matters such as voting, marrying, paying taxes, or choosing occupations. For instance, Article 772 required parental consent to marry under age thirty (for males) and twenty-five (for females), even though twenty was the legal age of majority. Unmarried men and women remained under the guardianship of the house head, or in his absence, the "family council," a body composed of three or four relatives who made decisions for dependents. The law enabled parents and guardians to arrange marriages in the interest of the family rather than according to the preferences of the individuals involved. A wife or an adopted son-in-law who had married into another household would lose custody of the children upon divorce, as the children belonged to the *ie* and not to individual parents (Art. 801 and 812[11]). The system made it theoretically difficult for youth to make independent decisions.

11 Yet, Japanese family structure was not static. Industrialization and urbanization gradually reshaped family structure into the nuclear model. A study, first published in 1937 by Toda Teizō and based on the national census of 1920, suggests that the highest percentage of families in several urban and rural areas consisted of the nuclear family with a husband, wife, and children (39.57%). In the cities, there were couples without children and single persons living alone or in dormitories. Meanwhile, the countryside, where the extended family still survived (31.96%), was depopulating.[12] In fact, so many teenage girls left their natal villages for factory jobs in the cities that there was a shortage of nursemaids (*komori*) for childcare on the farms, according to Kathleen Uno, who has written about the rise of charitable daycare centers as a response to the working poor. According to one estimate, more women worked outside the home in 1920 (over 55%) than in 1990 (under 45%). With fathers working outside the home, and grandfathers and uncles far away, many children grew up under their mothers' authority without directly experiencing the ideal family system.[13] Furthermore, discourse on individual rights did not disappear. It resurged during the liberal period of the Taishō Democracy Movement (1912–1926), resulting in suffrage for males over twenty-five.

12 Given the demographic changes, conservatives could not rely on laws to maintain the family system. They also needed propaganda. In response to the Popular Rights

Movement, the Meiji emperor's personal tutor Motoda Eifu (1818–1891) penned an imperial edict, the Great Principles of Education (*Kyōgaku taishi*), in which he blamed Western individualism and utilitarianism for corrupting the young. He called for a return to "ancestral teachings" and "the study of Confucius." Motoda and his patron, the Meiji emperor, examined the 1881 General Plan of Regulation for Elementary Schools (*Shōgakkō kyōsoku kōryō*), and asked its chief compiler Egi Kazuyuki (1853–1932) to include as history the mythical founding of Japan by the gods. By 1884, Motoda's next book *Essentials of Learning for the Young* (*Yōgaku kōyō*) was circulating widely in the public schools. Cultural nationalists, such as Nishimura Shigeki (1828–1902), shared Motoda's fear that Japanese identity would disappear if Western culture were to be adopted uncritically. Nishimura devised his own *Moral Primer for Elementary Schools* (*Shōgaku shūshin kun*) in 1880, which contained traditional axioms of filiality, including reverence for the emperor as father of the nation.[14]

13 From 1881 onwards, the Ministry of Education increased the school hours spent on nationalism and moral education. Authors of history textbooks were careful not to criticize the imperial family. An instruction manual for a 1910 set of moral primers tells teachers to speak of the emperor "in a grave, respectful way that would impress upon the children the respect and awe with which everyone should address the emperor." Under education minister Mori Arinori, the Imperial Decree of April 1886 described the elementary school as the vehicle for training the Japanese people to "revere the emperor and love the nation." However, the emperor's tutor Motoda harshly criticized Mori for promoting science instead of Confucianism. Two years later in 1889, Mori was assassinated by a conservative extremist.[15]

14 Motoda then co-authored the Imperial Rescript on Education of 1890 (*Kyōiku ni kansuru chokugo*), a document defining the spirit of education in the growing Japanese empire. It exhorted Japanese subjects to uphold the five Confucian relationships in their personal lives, to respect the government, and support the emperor, who is "coeval with Heaven and Earth." Students and teachers were expected to recite the rescript during school ceremonies and to venerate an imperial portrait distributed to each school. Given that school enrollment surpassed 90% by 1905, we may assume that almost all children and adults who went through the public school system after 1905 grew up with an awareness of family as a microcosm of the nation headed by the emperor. Whether they practiced it personally or not, they understood that respect for emperor began in the home with respect for parents. Furthermore, having recited the imperial rescript countless times at school, they would have been familiar with the exhortation "to offer yourselves courageously to the State." School textbooks glamorized self-sacrifice in stories about war heroes of the Sino-Japanese War (1884–1885) and the Russo-Japanese War (1894-1895).

15 After thirty years of family-state ideology, Japanese parents at the start of the China war in 1937 could be expected to make sacrifices for the emperor, even if it meant sending children to distant lands to labor for empire. However, the extent to which they cooperated or refused when the safety of their own child was at stake raises interesting questions about whether emperor-centered nationalism and the strong emphasis on respect for parents in family life were actually in harmony or in competition.

Forced Migration — Cooperation with and Resistance: The Young Pioneers

16 In the case of youth migration to Manchuria, the government's concern with family cohesion for patriotism became secondary to its imperial goal of "sending excellent youth in large numbers to Manchuria to fulfill the national policy of large-scale immigration in order to carry out the ideals of Japanese-Manchurian coexistence and co-prosperity.[16]" According to a survey, only 869 (8%) Young Pioneers out of 10,131 in the sixth year of the program had relatives among the immigrants in Manchuria, which means that most boys were separated from their families.[17] We would expect families to comply because of patriotism. However, the planners understood that patriotism alone might not be sufficient to overcome parental attachment to sons, especially if they contributed to the family economy.

17 Katō Kanji (1884-1967) evidently understood the potential objections when he first proposed the program in 1937. He wrote, "parents and elders will happily cooperate without reservations" if recruiters offer the boys a "more meaningful war service to the country" through a training program "that would open the door to a life that fulfills their hopes." Katō was a proponent of "peasantism" (*nōhon-shugi*), a movement to preserve rural farm life in face of modernization. The movement had become reactionary and nationalistic by the 1920s, but Katō was not merely an ideologue; he was pragmatic. As an official in the Ministry of Home Affairs, Katō had worked with farmers, founding agricultural schools and farmers' cooperatives in Ibaragi, Aichi, and Yamagata prefectures. His Young Pioneer program offered free agricultural training, supposedly equivalent to post-elementary education. (In Japan, only elementary school was free). Each Young Pioneer was promised 10 *chōbu* (roughly 10 hectares) of land in Manchuria and permission to marry after graduation. Such benefits attracted ambitious rural youth without means or opportunities.[18]

18 Katō deliberately targeted second and third sons, knowing that children were not equal in value under a household system based on primogeniture. Historically, small landholders and landless tenant farmers lacked the resources to set up collateral families for younger sons. In some villages, younger sons had been forbidden to marry. If their labor was not needed at home, there were few options besides entering another farm family as an adopted son-in-law or an indentured servant, or obtaining a temporary permit to leave the village for seasonal work as day laborers (*dekasegi*). Modernization brought the opportunity of factory employment, but it still meant leaving the safety of home on completion of elementary school. As Katō points out: "In recent times, not only have many boys already left their farm villages to work in military factories, but we calculate that there are about two hundred thousand who have reached the minimum age of employment, and will leave the villages." Since there was already a tradition of migrant youth looking for better opportunities, why not tap into it?

19 Recruiters from the army and the administered mass organizations visited schools, gave talks, and handed out propaganda pamphlets. One such pamphlet, *You too can become a Young Pioneer*, uses cute cartoons to illustrate the lifestyle and perks that a Young Pioneer might expect from the program. A cartoon shows a Young Pioneer shaking hands with a grateful Manchurian boy, no doubt a nod to the concept of the Greater Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. Other than that, the patriotic message seems muted, limited to the following

statement in the preface: "Everyone has already heard a hundred or two hundred times about the great mission of the Young Pioneers. Since a perfect chance like this comes along only rarely, we encourage you to bolster your courage, steel your resolve, and seize the opportunity to give your strength to support our country's continental policy.[19]"

20 Memoirs and surviving school essays indicate that upward mobility was as important a reason as patriotic loyalty for cooperating with the state. Nakamura Akio (1927–?) recalls in his autobiography how as a boy he decided to go to Manchuria when he grew up "to make a household I would not be ashamed of." His parents listened quietly to his plan and nodded. His father remarked that he could probably "eat better over there.[20]" "I like farming," a schoolboy wrote in an essay published in a boys' magazine in 1940. "I'm the third son, my parents gave me permission to go, so I want to somehow get admitted to the corps." In his opinion, Japan was "too small and cramped for farming." Either Manchuria or Brazil would be better. His mother, he wrote, agreed and urged his older brother to do the same: "Go to Manchuria, get lucky, make money and come back." The magazine editor praised the boy's resolve while correcting his reasoning. "Y-kun needs to reflect on his motivations," he commented. "The attitude of his mother, telling the boys to join in order to get the promised ten *chō* of land does not match the aims of Young Pioneers." He then explained to his young readers that going to Manchuria was not the same thing as emigrating to South America or Hawaii for a better life. The purpose was to "build the nation" in the same way that the annexation of Hokkaidō in the Meiji period enlarged Japan.[21]

21 The editor's reaction suggests a gap between parental and state expectations, but the way in which program was marketed to emphasize personal benefits is probably a reflection of Katō's interest in finding a "solution" for an impoverished sector of society with a history of tenant-farmer strikes, seen as politically destabilizing by the government. In his initial proposal, Katō argued that the Young Pioneer program would provide useful training and discipline for youth who might otherwise become troublesome and dissolute: "They congregate in the cities, where some remain unemployed, others attract the bad elements of society, or else they become the cause of social problems and thought crimes." By "thought crimes" Katō was referring to Communism and anti-war or anti-government political views. At least in Manchuria, he reasoned, the boys would be working for their own future and that of Japan.[22]

22 Survey questionnaires show that 90.7% of the 26,425 boys admitted in 1938 to Young Pioneer training camps, including the flagship in Ibaraki prefecture's Uchihara City came from farm villages, and 77.1% identified their family occupation as farming.[23] This remained true until the end of the war. Furthermore, the majority were second and third sons (70.2%), mainly between age 15 and 16, of whom a respectable number were academically gifted. Out of 8,2000 recruits in April 1940, 1,088 had been class leaders or assistant class leaders, precisely the sort of ambitious youth without opportunities who would be interested in the promise of free education.[24]

23 In 1939, a year after the first wave of Young Pioneers, applicants dropped by 60% to 9,508, well short of the government's goal of 30,000. Sakuramoto suspects that deserters and travelers brought home unfavorable reports of conditions in Manchuria. He cites the minutes of an agricultural association meeting in Osaka, in which an official doubted the educational value of the Young Pioneer camps in Manchuria, and concluded, "It is not good to separate such young lads from their mothers.[25]" Nakamura recalls staying at an inn on the eve of his departure by boat for Manchuria when a maid asked, "Who on earth

told you to go to Manchuria? Your teachers? Your parents?" Nakamura's best friend retorted, "What are you saying? Nobody told us to go. If we don't go to Manchuria and reclaim land, who will?" Nakamura recalls, "With tears in her eyes while serving dinner, the maid said, 'If you go to Manchuria, you will die for sure'.[26]"

24 Parental consent was supposedly required, so it is interesting to find that 42.5% of survey respondents in 1941 said that they had joined the Young Pioneers over the objections of their families. The number climbed to 49.2% in 1942. The survey distinguishes between family members who voiced doubts and those who objected right up to the end (meaning that they were not swayed by the "parent meetings" organized by associations involved in recruitment[27]). Clearly, the state favored the child's individual choice over the family's right to control him when it suited the state's interests.

25 There is no comparative data for 1938, but we wonder whether the purpose of the 1941 survey was to find out if parental resistance was a factor in the decline of applicants. Respondents overwhelmingly said they joined because of a teacher (3,422 in 1941 and 5,817 in 1944). Joining because of a parent was a distant third place in both years (429 in 1941 and 896 in 1944). Propaganda in the media took second place in 1944 (with 1,329 respondents[28]). It is likely that parental consent declined as the war dragged on and the risks became more obvious.

Forced Migration — Cooperation with and Resistance: Student laborers

26 The top high school for girls in Sendai, Miyagi prefecture, received government orders in autumn 1944 to recruit 100 girls from a pool of 200 fourth-year students to work in the Zushi naval factory in Kanagawa prefecture, just south of Tokyo. Kanagawa was home to a large number of military-industrial facilities. There were not enough students in Kanagawa to fill the demand, so an additional 22,500 students were brought in from Hokkaidō and the six prefectures of Tōhoku (including Miyagi), the traditionally poor northeast. They lived in barracks along with their homeroom teachers. Some six to eight thousand youth from Taiwan also worked in Kanagawa, volunteering in the same way as the Young Pioneers.[29] A collection of memoirs and diaries by the Miyagi high school girls was published after the war, revealing that many were eager to sign up, and excited to leave home on what seemed like an adventure. Since student conscript workers were typically given a ceremonial send-off like a soldier departing for war, it was a chance for a girl to feel like a hero, a *Yamato nadeshiku* (the name of a flower and an idiom for ideal feminine beauty[30]).

27 At first, only twenty girls received parental permission to volunteer. "I will never forget the day when the school principal Moroishi sensei summoned us to the assembly hall and shouted, 'You are traitors to your country,'" Miyoshi Hiroko recalls. "We all wanted to be of use to the country. Only, our parents were worried and said no to the school. Given the situation, the principal's words wounded our pure maiden hearts. Deeply mortified we begged to go to Zushi." In the end, parental approval, although desirable, was actually unnecessary, and the school was able to gather a number of volunteers. As with the Young Pioneers, the state paid lip service to filiality, but ignored it when parents' decisions were not in harmony with state policy. Nevertheless, during the morning

ceremony (*chōrei*) at the factory in Zushi, the girls were expected to bow in the direction of their native Miyagi and say, "Good morning mother and father.[31]"

28 The Ministry of Education's 1941 moral primer for students, *The Way of Subjects* (*Shinmin no michi*), shifted the emphasis in family-state propaganda from filial piety (respect for parents) *and* loyalty (obedience to emperor) to filial piety *equals* loyalty. The Ministry's previous major propaganda tract, the 1937 Fundamentals of Our National Polity (*Kokutai no hongi*), defined filial piety and loyalty under separate headings, linking them somewhat loosely: "The direct object of filial piety is one's parents, but in its relationship with the emperor finds a place within loyalty." The *Way of Subjects*, published four years later, conflates filial piety with loyalty more blatantly to emphasize loyalty:

> "In Japan, filial piety cannot exist singly without its absolute counterpart. It is loyalty. Loyalty is the principle. Filial piety at home must be loyalty. Both are one and inseparable [...] The first requisite of filial piety is to fulfill the duty of subjects to guard and maintain the Imperial Throne in observance of the bequeathed will of their ancestors.[32]"

29 Thus, filial piety became loyalty to emperor, as if to emphasize more clearly that a child's first duty was to emperor rather than father. This nuance provides a rationale for allowing minors to disobey parents in the interests of the state.

30 Compared to the Young Pioneers program, student factory labor presented few benefits for the child in the eyes of parents. Certainly it was paid. From May 1944, the wages for students in the third year of middle school and above were equivalent to the starting salary of an elementary-school graduate, with boys earning fifty Yen per month, and girls earning forty Yen per month. The amount was not negligible. However, the students themselves almost never received wages directly. After fees and taxes for school expenses, transportation and lodging were deducted, the remainder was usually deposited by the school principal directly into the postal savings system or the national bank to be distributed after the war. In the case of the Yokosuka High School for girls, the remainder appears to have been paid in cash to the parents, which would have been unusual.[33]

31 One could argue that there was a tradition among farm girls of the northeast to work before marriage, so labor service could not have been much different. However, the girls who entered into indentured service as maids, waitresses, geisha, and textile workers belonged to the same tenant farmer cohort as the boys who joined the Young Pioneers. Those who were called up for student labor service came from families that could afford higher education. Many would have been aiming to become teachers or marry their educated male counterparts aspiring for white-collar jobs. Factory work did not present any benefit of upward mobility. To the contrary, it disrupted education, and the risks were plainly visible to parents, especially after the devastating firebombing of Tokyo in March 1945. Ishikawa Kiyoko recalls that at age 15 she left her hometown in Iwate prefecture for labor service in Kanagawa. Since she wished to attend a women's medical school, she was placed in a factory that supposedly accommodated students studying for exams. "Call it studying if you will, but all I could do was read the books I had at hand. There were no classes, and our supervisors were teachers of literature and sewing, who could not answer my questions.[34]"

32 Statistics are lacking, but memoirs gathered by the Kanagawa Association suggest that there were parents and teachers who actively disobeyed and abducted their children in the last year of the war. Parent-teacher associations met with school principals and

demanded that their daughters be released from service in Tokyo and assigned to war work in their hometowns. The school principals, who were technically government officials responsible for disseminating the state's propaganda in the classroom, nevertheless sided with the parents, acting as their representatives. Along with the homeroom teachers, they attempted to negotiate with military overseers and civilian managers of factories.

33 When students reached the age of graduation, teachers had a window of opportunity to send them home before they were reclassified as adult conscript workers. Hosokowa Shōko of Tōhoku Women's High School recalls overhearing two teachers discussing a plan to send the students home. Late at night in the factory dorm, the teachers coached the students on how to draft and send out résumés for jobs in her native Iwate prefecture. Hosokawa remembers accompanying the teachers to plead their case before a manager of Hitachi Precision Instruments, who fortunately was sympathetic. "Many boys in my hometown have gone to war, so there are not enough workers," Hosokawa told him. "Whether I work in this factory or work in my hometown, I am doing my duty for the war, so please let me go home." Her teachers added: "We would like to send the students safely back to their parents." They fully expected to be reprimanded on return to Morioka City, but local officials congratulated them for bringing home the entire class.[35] Similarly, the parents of fifty graduating seniors of Toyoma Women's High School petitioned the school principal to negotiate with the Navy to send their daughters home to Miyagi prefecture, instead of extending their contracts after graduation. A jealous co-worker from another school in the same Yokosuka Naval Yard later accused the Toyoma girls of running away from duty. The teacher who arranged it faced stigma even after the war, telling his former students, "I don't want to remember that nightmare." Apparently, the Ishinomaki branch of the Special Higher Police investigated the school.[36]

34 Students who were too young to graduate were harder to rescue. Parents of third-year students from Mizusawa Higher Women's School became agitated upon news of the March 1945 firebombing of Tokyo. Teacher Kikuchi Taneyuki failed to obtain permission to release the ninety-five girls in his charge at the Tokyo Aviation Instruments Company in Kawasaki, and decided to arrange for them to run away. Obtaining train tickets for large groups without permission was almost impossible; desperate civilians stood in line for hours to buy tickets to escape the city. Luckily, he found an individual in the Tokyo rail office who was willing to make a private deal. As the girls fled the dorms, leaving behind all but their most important possessions, the dorm supervisor threatened to call the *kenpeitai* (military police). Kikuchi was detained at his school under house arrest "until further notice," but was allowed to go free when all workers were officially released after a bomb destroyed the factory.[37] Others were not so lucky. A group of concerned parents devised a "group escape plan" for Aizu Middle School students in a Kawasaki factory, obtaining train tickets with great difficulty. However, the *kenpeitai* thwarted the plan, arresting the supervising teacher.[38]

Family Ideology Versus Forced Migration in the Case of School Evacuees

35 After the shock of the Doolittle Raid in December 1942, Foreign Minister Kase Toshikazu and General Tatsumi Eiichi advised Prime Minister Tōjō Hideki to evacuate non-essential civilians from the cities. General Tatsumi had witnessed the London Blitz while serving as

military attaché to the Japanese Embassy in London. Tōjō objected: "The spirit of the people resides in Japan's household system, and requires the will to stick together no matter what. Splitting up families through such things as evacuations is preposterous.[39]" His view of the household system as the basis of national morale is simply another articulation of the family-state ideology in the textbooks and the 1890 imperial rescript. In other words, it was the standard view. Nevertheless, the state had already separated many teenagers from their families for the war effort. Perhaps the problem with evacuation is that the expense it would incur would not be offset by productive labor. The state's resources were already stretched thin by war on multiple fronts.

36 In the opinion of Naito Ikuji, an educator and one of the earliest chroniclers of school evacuations, the novelist Nogami Yaeko (1885–1985) may have been the first to publicly challenge Tōjō's view. Nogami pointed out the hypocrisy of his position in her newspaper editorial, "Evacuation of the Population and the Problem of School Children," serialized in the Asahi newspaper over a three-day period (28-30 January 1944). "If it were the peacetime Japan of yesterday, we would directly oppose it on the grounds that taking children away from their mothers destroys the basis of the household system," she wrote. "But currently it is a time when even housewives are asked to leave the family they should be protecting and work in factories." She pointed out there was a tradition of sending Tokyo children to relatives in the countryside after earthquakes, but "not all children are so advantaged.[40]"

37 While recognizing the cost and complexity of a mass evacuation of children, Nogami insisted: "No matter how much money it takes, I believe that it is absolutely necessary at this stage to move the children to a safe place, and protect their health without stopping their education." Unfortunately the children might have to live in make-shift barracks, but at least, fresh food was more accessible in the countryside. "Since the ideal locations are remote mountain villages, we will have to create associations of volunteers to educate the children in the absence of the availability of schools." Nogami quoted a verse from Yamanoue no Okura's well-loved poem, "On Thinking of Children," in the 8th century poetry collection, the *Man'yōshū*: "Not silver, or gold, or precious jewels, could ever match the far greater treasure that is one's own child." Educated readers would have recalled that Okura added Buddhist references to the poem's preface, hinting that love for one's own children is a worldly attachment impeding the path to enlightenment. Yet, as literature scholar Haruo Shirane points out, "In the final reckoning, no treasure, not even the Buddhist seven treasures represented by silver, gold, and jewels, can match his love for his children.[41]"

38 Nogami followed up this endorsement of private parental love by acknowledging the state view that in "today's Japan," children were not merely "our own" children, but the children of the nation (who by implication may be sacrificed for the good of the nation). She then twists this argument, in Saito's opinion, by insisting that all Japanese children, one's own and others, needed to be protected because they were the future of the nation that adults were presently fighting to protect.[42]

39 The Army Ministry secretly issued contingency plans for civilian evacuation in the worst-case scenario. This shows the divide between the public face of the government, and the army's more realistic risk assessment. The army was not answerable to the Prime Minister; it reported directly to the office of emperor. Nevertheless, the civilian government controlled funds for many civilian purposes. Tōjō's reluctance delayed the release of funds. In January 1944, the governor of Tokyo urged civilians to send their

children to live with relatives in the countryside at their own expense. However, many urban residents lacked extended family relations in the countryside. While the ideal model of family presumed that each household was linked to an ancestral homesite in the countryside, in actuality many urban residents were the descendents of migrants who had cut their ties to their roots and started new stem families in the cities. Without the usual network of relatives to depend on, children of the inner city (*shita-machi*) needed state aid.

40 The American bombing of northern Kyūshū on June 16, 1944 finally prompted the National Diet to authorize funding on June 30 to evacuate public-school children in groups led by their teachers. Handicapped children and those under eight years old were not evacuated, leading some historians to suspect that the primary motive was not humanitarian, but to free up mothers to work in defense of the country, or to preserve the future work force until needed.[43] Once they turned twelve, evacuees were recalled to the cities and put to work under the student labor mobilization law. However, the speed with which city education boards and parent-teacher associations rushed to action, raising money, getting evacuations underway by early August, barely a month after the Diet's decision, illustrates how urgently parents desired this mass migration.

41 Tokyo's chief education officer later recalled sleepless nights trying to make all the arrangements, such as contacting temples and hot-spring resorts with the capacity to accommodate large groups. Food was in short supply, but parent-teacher associations organized food drives, and successfully petitioned the Ministry of Education to increase its funding for supplies. Personal memoirs indicate that parents privately mailed or delivered extra food to their children. For forty days in July and August, Asahi newspaper headlines encouraged school evacuation. Only Aichi prefecture delayed evacuations because of parental mistrust.[44] Thus, in contrast to previous forced migrations of youth, parents and local officials were more eager than the national government, which dragged its feet.

Conclusion

42 Through propaganda in the media and the schools, Japan's leaders told Japanese subjects that their patriotic duty was to respect and obey the emperor as if he were their father or house head. This made it easy for the state to override the considerable power of parents afforded by the Civil Code of 1898, when it was considered strategically necessary for the war effort. However, the state also had to offer incentives to compensate for splitting up families, normally unacceptable under the family ideology because, regardless of patriotism, Japanese parents were understandably keen to protect and preserve their offspring, even when their sons and daughters were eager to serve their country. Hence the state promised land and education to the Young Pioneers and wages and study hours to the student factory workers. In both cases, parents cooperated in the early stages but became less cooperative as the risks to their children became more apparent with the worsening of the war. Conversely, parents appear to have welcomed the school evacuation program, perceiving it to be a benefit to their children, even though it meant splitting up families, sending pre-teen children far from home.

43 Of course, this does not mean that parents of school evacuees always cooperated while parents of conscripted student laborers never did. There are stories of parents who decided to bring home children evacuated to the countryside who were homesick or

suffering from hunger and cold because of logistical problems. Meanwhile, the majority of parents apparently resigned themselves to the patriotic sacrifice of their children to military factories because the war depended on it. Nevertheless, the incidents in Kanagawa suggest that resistance to factory work, when it did occur, was more organized, with parents and teachers conspiring together, rather than lone parents acting individually. The Japanese state demanded tremendous sacrifice from its people during the war. When it came to displacing children, however, it could impose its will up to a point, but propaganda about the family-state ideology may not have played as important a role as one might expect. Success depended on how invested the parents were in the benefits of youth migration.

NOTES

1. SASAYA Kōji, "Gakuto kinrō dōin gaisetsu" (An outline of student labor mobilization), in *Gakuto kinrō dōin kiroku: Sensō no naka no shōnen, shōjotachi* (A record of student labor mobilization: Boys and girls in the middle of war), edited by Kanagawa no Gakuto Kinrō Dōin o Kiroku Suru Kai, Tokyo, Kōbunkyū, 1999, p. 188–189. The editors will hereafter be referred to as Kanagawa Association.

2. Kaneda Mari proposes 400,000 orphans, arguing that the Home Ministry's figure of 123,512, reported on 1 February 1948, is based only on the number of children in shelters two years after Japan's defeat. See KANEDA Mari, *Tōkyō daikūshū to sensō kōji: inpei sareta shinjitsu o otte* (The firebombing of Tokyo and the war orphans: Finding the truth behind a cover-up), Tokyo, Kage Shobō, 2002, p. 171.

3. GOODMAN Roger, *The Changing Role of Child Protection Institutions in Contemporary Japan*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000, p. 49–50.

4. SAKURAMOTO Tomio, *Man-Mō kaitaku seishōnen giyūgun* (The Manchu-Mongol Pioneer Youth Loyal and Brave Army), Tokyo, Aoki Shoten, 1987, p. 3.

5. SASAYA Kōji, "Gakuto kinrō...," *in* Kanagawa Association (ed.), *Gakuto ...*, p. 184.

6. KANEDA, *Tōkyō daikūshū...*, p. 1-2, 64.

7. NAGANO-KEN REKISHI KYOIKUSHA KYOGI KAI, *Man-Mō Kaitaku Seishōnen Giyūgun to Shinano Kyōiku Kai* (The Manchu-Mongol Pioneer Youth Loyal and Brave Army and the Shinano Education Association), Tokyo, Ōtsuki Shoten, 2000, p. viii, 285-286.

8. SHIRATORI Michihiro, *Man-Mō kaitaku seishōnen giyūgun shi kenkyū* (Research on the history of the Manchu-Mongol Pioneer Youth Loyal and Brave Army), Sapporo, Hokkaidō Daigaku Shuppansha, 2008, p. 2.

9. HORIO Teruhisa, *Educational Thought and Ideology in Modern Japan*, translated by Steven Platzer, Tokyo, University of Tokyo Press, 1988, p. 81.

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11. SEBALD W. J., trans., *The Civil Code of Japan*, London, J. L. Thompson & Co., 1934.

12. TODA Teizō, *Kazoku kōsei* (Family Structure), Tokyo, Kōbundō Shobō, 1942, p. 247-248, 605.

13. MASATAKA Nobuo, *Ikuji no nihonjin* (Childrearing and the Japanese), Tokyo, Iwanami Shoten, 1999, p. 43. For the difficulties facing working mothers see UNO Kathleen S., *Passages to Modernity: Motherhood, Childhood and Social Reform in Early Twentieth-Century Japan,* Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press, 1999, p. 30, 33.

14. Varley Paul H. discusses in detail the modern rebirth of emperor-centered nationalism in his *Imperial Restoration in Medieval Japan*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1971, p. 158-164.

15. HALL Ivan P., *Mori Arinori*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1973, p. 165, 173, 342-351, 387; TSURUMI E. Patricia, "Meiji Primary School Language and Ethics Textbooks: Old Values for a New Society?," in *Modern Asian Studies* 8 (2), 1974, p. 255; VARLEY Paul H., *Imperial Restoration ...*, p.162.

16. "Goals," n° 1, *in* TAKUMU SHO TAKUMU KYOKU, "Manshū seinen imin boshū yōmō" (A Brief on the recruitment of youth immigrants for Manchuria, 1938), *in* SAKURAMOTO Tomio, *Man-Mō kaitaku ...*, p. 45.

17. Fig. 10, *in* SAKURAMOTO Tomio, *Man-Mō kaitaku ...*, p. 141.

18. KATŌ Kanji *et al.*, "*Man-Mō kaitaku seishōnen giyūgun hensei ni kansuru kenpakusho*" (Petition regarding the formation of the Manchu-Mongol Young Pioneer Loyal and Brave Army), *in* SAKURAMOTO Tomio, *Man-Mō kaitaku ...*, p. 38.

19. Author unknown, "Anata mo giyūgun ni naremasu" (You too can become a Young Pioneer), reprinted *in* SHIRATORI Michihiro (ed.), *Manmō kaitaku ...*, p. 57.

20. NAKAMURA Akio, *Aa Man-Mō kaitaku seishōnen giyūgun* (Ah! That Manchu-Mongol Young Pioneer Loyal and Brave Army), Tokyo, Shinpūsha, 2007, p. 11.

21. Qtd *in* SAKURAMOTO Tomio, *Man-Mō kaitaku ...*, p. 26.

22. KATŌ Kanji *et al.*, "Man-Mō kaitaku...," qtd *in* SAKURAMOTO Tomio, *Man-Mō kaitaku ...*, p. 38.

23. Fig. 25, 26, 27, *in* SHIRATORI Michihiro, *Man-Mō kaitaku ...*, p. 131–33.

24. Fig. 5, *in* SAKURAMOTO Tomio, *Man-Mō kaitaku ...*, p. 137–138.

25. SAKURAMOTO Tomio, *Man-Mō kaitaku ...*, p. 142–143.

26. NAKAMURA Akio, *Aa Man-Mō kaitaku ...*, p. 23.

27. Fig. 39, *in* SHIRATORI Michihiro, *Man-Mō kaitaku ...*, p. 178.

28. Fig. 10, *in* SAKURAMOTO Tomio, *Man-Mō kaitaku ...*, p. 139-141.

29. "Hajime ni" (Foreword) and SATO Akio, "Gakuto kinrō dōin no tame shinda seitō kazu" (The number of students who died for student labor mobilization), *in* Kanagawa Association (ed.), *Gakuto ...*, p. 1-3, 217.

30. MIYAGI KEN DAI-ICHI KOJO YONJU NANA KAISEI, *Uminari no hibiki wa tooku: Miyagi ken dai-ichi kōjo gakutō rōdōin no kiroku* (The sound of the waves is far away: the records of student labor mobilization from Miyagi Women's First High School), Tokyo, Sōshisha, 2007, p. 8-11, 28.

31. MIYAGI KEN ..., *Uminari no hibiki ...*, p. 12, 27, 42.

32. "Spiritual Mobilization," *in* DE BARY Wm. Theodore, *et al.* (ed.), *Sources of Japanese Tradition* v.2, New York, Columbia University Press, 1964, p. 970, 1001.

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34. ISHIKAWA Kiyoko, "Kinrō dōin, sono taiken ga motarashita mono" (The effects brought about by my conscript labor experience), *in* Kanagawa Association (ed.), *Gakuto ...*, p. 233–234.

35. HOSOKAWA Shōko, "Furusato e no haichi tenkan ni sensei to honsō" (My teacher's struggle to rotate our jobs back to our home town), *in* Kanagawa Association (ed.), *Gakuto ...*, p. 104-105.

36. KIKUCHI Yō, SUZUKI Sakiko, SATO Estsuko, and YAMAUCHI Shōko, "Sensei no yūkina ketsudan" (Our teacher's brave decision), *in* Kanagawa Association (ed.), *Gakuto ...*, p. 112-114, 118.

37. KIKUCHI Taneyuki, "Mizusawa kō jogakusei dōin ni tsuite" (Concerning Mizusawa Women's High School labor mobilization), *in* Kanagawa Association (ed.), *Gakuto ...*, p. 108-111.

38. SASAYA Kōji, "Gakuto kinrō...", *in* Kanagawa Association (ed.), *Gakuto ...*, p. 193.

39. NAITO Ikuji, *Gakudō sokai* (The evacuation of school children), Tokyo, Dōseisha, 2001, p. 8.

40. Qtd *in* NAITO Ikuji, *Gakudō sokai*, p. 12-13.

41. SHIRANE Haruo (ed.), *Traditional Literature: An Anthology, Beginnings to 1600*, New York, Columbia University Press, 2007, p. 99; NAITO Ikuji, *Gakudō sokai*, p. 13.

42. NAITO Ikuji, *Gakudō sokai*, p. 14.

43. SASAYA Kōji, "Gakuto kinrō...," *in* Kanagawa Association (ed.), *Gakuto ...*, p. 188.

44. HOSHIDA Gen, *Gakudō shūdan sokai no kenkyū* (Research on group evacuations of school children), Tokyo: Kindai Bungeisha, 1994, p. 12, 24-25, 33, 149, 151.

ABSTRACTS

This paper examines the disjunction between the state ideology of family in wartime Japan (1937–1945) and the total war policies that tore families apart, even removing children from their parents' care and supervision. On the one hand, the militarist government promoted a romanticized vision of the extended, paternalistic family as the basis of the nation-state. On the other hand, the government adopted "Total War" policies that sent many breadwinners to battlefields and military factories, while encouraging wives and grandparents to volunteer with Administered Mass Organizations (AMO). Under the Hirota administration, a program was established to send teenage boys, many as young as 14, to colonize Manchuria. About 86,000 were sent between 1938 and 1945. The Tôjô administration lowered the factory age limit from 16 to 11 in 1943 to send over a million teenagers, both boys and girls, to live in dormitories and labor in

munitions factories or farms. Clearly, the government's concern with family cohesion for patriotism became secondary to its wartime objectives.

How did the family ideology, supposedly central to upholding the state, thrive alongside the forced separations of children from their families? Examining the language of morals textbooks issued to schools by the Ministry of Education, we see that the government promoted a nationalist conception of Japan as a "family state," in which all Japanese families were to be considered collateral branches of a "stem family," headed by the emperor. This made it easy for the state in the name of the emperor, the supreme family patriarch, to override the considerable power of parents afforded by the Civil Code of 1898, when it was considered strategically necessary for the war effort. However, it appears that Japanese parents were aware of the conflict of interests between the ideological sanctity of the family and the Total War state's need to sacrifice family for the war effort. We propose that parents cooperated willingly if the perceived benefit for the child outweighed the risk, and resisted cooperation if the perceived risk outweighed the benefit.

Cet article étudie le décalage entre l'idéologique familialiste au Japon durant la guerre (1937-1945) et les politiques de guerre totale qui ont déchiré des familles, notamment en séparant les enfants de leurs parents. D'une part, le gouvernement militaire prônait une vision idéaliste de la famille agrandie et paternaliste comme modèle de l'État-nation.

D'autre part, le gouvernement avait adopté des politiques de « guerre totale », envoyant des chefs de famille au combat et dans les usines militaires, tout en encourageant les femmes et les grands-parents à se porter volontaires auprès des organisations administratives de masse. Sous l'administration Hirota, un programme fut mis en place pour envoyer les garçons adolescents, certains âgés de 14 ans seulement, coloniser la Mandchourie. Environ 86.000 jeunes y furent envoyés entre 1938 et 1945. L'administration Tôjô rabaissa l'âge limite de travail en usine de 16 à 11 ans dans le but d'envoyer plus d'un million d'adolescents, filles et garçons, vivre dans des résidences et travailler dans des usines de munitions et des fermes. La préoccupation du gouvernement pour la cohésion familiale dans un souci de patriotisme était ostensiblement secondaire par rapport aux objectifs de guerre.

Comment l'idéologie familiale, soi disant centrale au maintien de l'État, a-t-elle pu prospérer alors que les enfants étaient arrachés à leurs familles ? En étudiant de plus près le vocabulaire des manuels scolaires de morale distribués par le ministère de l'Éducation, on s'aperçoit que le gouvernement prônait une conception nationaliste du Japon comme « État familial » dans lequel toutes les familles japonaises étaient considérées comme des branches subsidiaires d'une « famille souche » dirigée par l'empereur. Ce système permettait à l'État d'empiéter sur les droits conférés aux parents par le Code civil de 1898, au nom de l'empereur, patriarche de famille suprême, lorsque jugé nécessaire à l'effort de guerre. Cependant, il semblerait que les parents nippons aient été bien conscients du conflit d'intérêts entre l'idéologie sacrée de la famille et ce besoin de l'état de guerre totale sacrifiant des familles au nom de l'effort de guerre. Les parents coopéraient volontiers si l'avantage pour l'enfant semblait supérieur au risque encouru, et étaient plus dans le cas contraire.

INDEX

Mots-clés: migrations forcées, enfance et jeunesse, Japon, seconde guerre mondiale, idéologie familialiste

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